

# Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls

## Tom Tit's Tricks.

I have a really curious and surprising experiment to tell you about to-day, boys and girls.

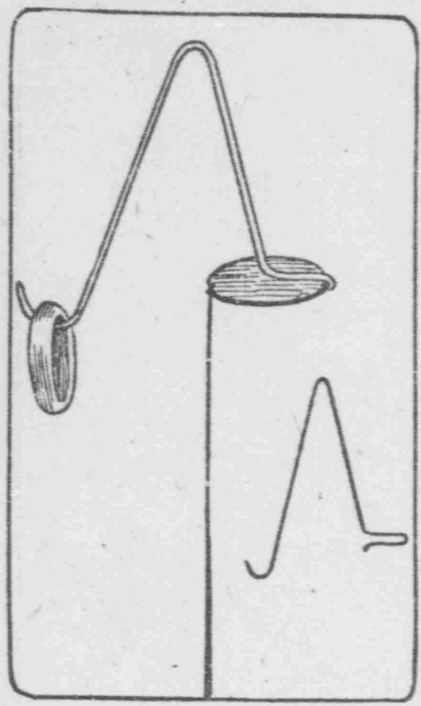
Take a piece of thin wire or a hairpin and bend it into the shape indicated on the right of this picture.

In the sharp bend you have given the one end of the wire firmly fix a coin, and on the hook at the other hang a ring.

Now take a darning needle, stick the head of it into the smaller end of a well-formed cork, set the cork on a flat surface, and then rest the coin on top of the needle.

On your letting go, it would, of course, seem that the wire, ring, and coin would immediately fall over. But that is where the surprise comes in!

Instead of falling over, the weight of the whole apparatus adjusts itself on the



Balanced on the Point of a Needle.

needle point and finds a position of perfect equilibrium, and there it rests for an indefinite time.

Suppose you then give a gentle touch that sets it into motion. Even then it will not fall over, but will apparently swing around on the needle point as a pivot, and you can keep it moving as long as you please.

Try this experiment. It will interest your friends as much as yourself.

Now I shall tell you of a perfectly safe wager you can make if you wish, or you can exhibit this as a trick.

Make a proposition that you will fill a glass with water and place it on a table in such a manner that your friend cannot move it to another place without spilling the whole of its contents.

The way to do it is as follows: Fill a glass with water, and having laid over it a piece of paper, which covers the water and the edges of the glass, place the palm of your hand on the paper, and, taking up the glass with the other hand, turn it upside down very quickly, and place it on a perfectly flat part of the table.

Then gently, very gently, withdraw the paper. The water in the glass will remain in it, since the air cannot enter, and your friend cannot move it any way without allowing the air to enter, and consequently spilling the water.

You see, do you not, how safely you can make a wager on the success of this performance?



Fifteen words are pictured or suggested in the cut below. Write them down in a list and you will find the initials will spell (1) the name of a famous man and (2) something he will be eating some day this month.

Can you give Polly Evans the entire list of fifteen words and the two words of the answer?

**Metagram.**

Example—I am something sweet baked; change my head and I am a body of water; change my head again and I am a garden implement; change my head a third time and I am a word for sleep.

Answer—Cake—Lake—Wake.

I am something worn by a king; change my head and I am to scowl; change my head again and I am to inundate with water; change my head yet again and I am a color.

Can you give the four words?

**Printers' Pl.**

Who can make the following jolly winter verse which has been knuckled into Printers' Pl?

Lod Rehtw si het ann orf em. Tosut hedtee, nodus, dan tadsee.

Letsee renves dan snobe fo sarbs tahn eh, Meece won, moce lowb, eh's deary!

**Enigma.**

I am composed of six letters. My 5, 6 is not off. My 4, 5, 6 is a weight. My 3, 5, 6 is not daughter. My 2, 1 is to weep aloud. My whole is the name of a city.

**Jumbled Rivers.**

The following are all Maryland rivers. See if you can make out the entire list: 1. Acapton. 2. Tachpoken. 3. Xtonpaut. 4. Kile. 5. Cowmoci. 6. Koompeoo. 7. Patpcooa.

**Drop-letter Insects.**

The following drop-letter words are all names of insects. Can you supply the omitted letters and give Polly Evans the entire list of insects?

1. — o — h.  
2. — sp. —  
3. B — — ti —  
4. — — — s —  
5. — — — — —  
6. — — — — —

7. C — — e — e —  
8. — r — g — f — y —  
9. B — — — l — b — e —  
10. — a — — — —  
11. — — — — —  
12. C — — e — p — — ar.  
13. — — — — —  
14. — — — — —

**The Imprisoned Miners.**

The line on this diagram shows the route by which the miners succeeded in safely reaching the mouth of the mine.

**Answers to Last Week's Puzzles.**

**Word Chains.**

1. Can-dor, dor-mer, mer-man, man-fall, ful-cra, cra-ter, ter-ror.  
2. Sam-son, son-net, net-her, her-bal, bal-let, let-ter, ter-ror.

**Puzzle of Four Cities.**

Denver	Monroe
Duluth	Lowell
Groton	Boston
Sibley	Antonia
Quincy	Canton
Beloit	El Paso

**MADE OVER FOR BOSTON BABIES.**

Patens Jacobus Horner, Sedebat in corner. Edmund Christmas pie; Jemima (dumb); Utrixit plum. Ciamany quod a sharp pier am I! —Boston Transcript.

## UPSIDE DOWN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

A capital diving story is told in an English school paper by a man signing himself "An Amateur Diver."

I believe, says he, by some remarkable process of nature every third male person is born a diver. Whilstable is the place where most divers grow, and where I caught the temptation to go a-diving myself.

I mentioned my desire to one or two old divers, but met with jeers and suspicion. But whilstable never produced a diver that could put me off. I bought a diving dress, and got permission to go down and amuse myself on a sunken coasting vessel lying off shore a little distance.

It was a noble diving suit, and the new india rubber squeaked musically as I moved, and smelt very refreshing. There was a shield-shaped plate, rather like a label on a decanter, hanging on my chest, and a noble metal collar—about thirty-two the size would have been on the usual scale.

I had also a very fetching red night-cap, while my helmet was a terror to all beholders. I don't mind confessing to a certain amount of discomfort while they were building me up in this dress—partly due to a vivid imagination. The helmet made me think of the people in the story who put hot pots on the heads of strangers, and I seemed stifling at once.

**All Ready for the Descent.**

There wasn't much comfort to be got out of the leaden shoes—try a pair for yourself and see—but which all was ready, I made a shift to get overboard and to crawl slowly down the ladder.

It was not a great deal of the outer world that I could see through my windows, and I hung on to the ladder with something of a desperate clutch. When at last the water stretched away level around my windows, then, I confess, I hesitated for a moment. But I made the next step with a certain involuntary blink, and I was under water.

All the heaviness—or most of it—had gone out of my feet, and all my movements partook of a curiously easy yet slowish character after all. At the top of my helmet the air escape valve bubbled merrily, and I tried to think of myself as a plumed knight striding among the fishes. You do think of the silliest things on certain cheerful occasions.

It was not as long as it seemed before I was on the wreck, and down below in the nearest hold, Regular professionals had already been at work, and access to different parts of the ship had been made easy.

Now, in this big hold were an immense number of barrels, stood on end and packed tightly together—barrels of oil, of ketchup from externals. I tried to move one, but plainly they were all jammed tightly together, and not one would budge.

I took the light ax, with which I had provided myself, using it alternately as wedge and lever, and at last felt the barrel move. I had certainly loosened it, and I palled up the ax with the intention of trying to lift the barrel, when suddenly I was inguished in an awful convulsion, as of many earthquakes in a free fight!

The world was a mob of bouncing oil barrels, which hit me everywhere, as I floundered in intricate maneuvers, and finally found myself staggering at the bottom of the hold, and staring at the roof, whence all the barrels were sticking like balloons, absolutely blocking up the hatchway above me.

What was this? Some demonic practical joke of fiends inhabiting this awful green sea about me? Were they grinning at me from the corners of their holes? Or, had some vast revolution in the ways of



A Mob of Bouncing Barrels.

nature taken place in a second, and the law of gravity been reversed? It was not at all warm down there, but I perspired violently!

Then a notion flashed upon me. Those barrels must have been empty. Jammed together, they stayed below, of course, but once the jam was loosened, they would fly at once toward the surface.

**Gloomy Thoughts of a Fool.**

Then I thought more. I had been an ass. Of course, those barrels would do as they had done, even were they full of oil. Oil floats on water, as everybody should know. They might be either full or empty, it didn't matter a bit. I had forgotten that I was moving in a different element from the air I was used to, where barrels of oil did not rise up and fly into space without warning.

Obviously, I had made a fool of myself; but I had some comfort in the reflection that there was nobody about to see it. Then it came upon me suddenly that I would rather have some one there after all, for I was helpless. Those horrible barrels were having another jam in the hatchway now, and my retreat was cut off entirely.

Here I was, like a rat in a cage, boxed in on every side. My communication cord and my air pipe led up between the barrels to outer safety; but what of that? Why did I ever make a submarine idiot of myself, and go rummaging about, where I had no business, at the bottom of a rubber gas pipe? If I could have dated myself back an hour at that moment, I believe I should have changed my mind about going in for this amusement.

I made an effort, pulled myself together, and determined on heroic measures. My ax lay near, and, with a little groping, I found it. I would hew my way out of this difficulty through the side of the vessel. I turned on the inoffensive timber, and my side and backed away viciously—with, I really fancy, a certain touch of that wild, stern, unholly joy that any one feels who is smashing somebody else's property with no prospect of having to pay for it. Every boy with a catapult, who lives near an empty house, will understand the feeling I mean—especially if the empty house has a large conservatory.

The timbers were certainly stout. The work was a bit curious to the senses—the axe feeling to work with a deal more dash and go than the arm that directed it. At any rate, the exercise was pretty hard. Any millionaire in want of an excellent healthy, and expensive exercise should try chopping his way through the sides of ships—it will do him a world of good, and will be as expensive as anybody could possibly desire. After a while I found that I had well started a plank, and, once through, chopping away round the hole was not so difficult. Still, when I had made a hole big enough to get through, I did not feel by any means as fresh as I had when first that horrible copper pot was screwed down over my head.

I squeezed through the hole, and at the



I Had Turned Upside Down.

first step I had ever made on the sea bottom, I came a complicated cropper over my communication cord. I got up, but as I stepped clear of the cord, a frightful conviction seized my mind that I was a bigger fool than I had ever given myself credit for being.

What in the world was the good of getting out through the side of the vessel, when that communication cord—my only means of signaling—and that air-pipe—my only means of submarine life—led up through the boat itself and among those horrible oil barrels? Awful! Awful! I sat down helplessly on a broken rock and stared blankly through my windows. To weep would have been mere bravado, with so much salt water already about me.

**Impossible to Signal.**

I tried to signal with the communication cord, but it was caught somewhere in that congregation of oil barrels. It seemed to me all up, except myself, who was all down, with no prospect of ever rising in the world again.

Shadowy forms came and went in the water about me, and I speculated desperately in how long or how short a time these sea creatures would be having a dinner party, with me as the chief attraction.

I wondered, casually, whether the india rubber would agree with them, and hoped that it would not. Then I wondered what they would take for the indignation and I thought they would probably take each other—it's their way, I believe.

I was wandering on in this way, when an inspiration seized me—a great inspiration. I should have called out "Eureka!" as did the venerable discoverer of that principle of specific gravity that had lately (literally) taken a rise out of me, if I had thought of it, but I didn't, and was fortunate, because it was rather a chesty affair.

This was my notion—a desperate one, but still one with hope in it. I would

shut off the air-escape valve on my helmet, so that the air being pumped in would inflate my india rubber dress like a bladder. Then I could cut my air-pipe and communication cord, stuffing the pipe and tying it as best I could, take off my leaden shoes, and rise to the surface triumphantly. Like an air cushion, or, say, an oil barrel. Specific gravity having taken a rise—all the rise—out of me, I would proceed to take a rise out of specific gravity—a great, glorious, and effective rise to the upper world. No office boy on promotion ever looked forward to his rise with more hope than I to mine. It was a desperate expedient certainly, but what else could I do?

I took off one leaden shoe and loosened the other, ready to kick away. I shut the escape valve. I cut the cord with my ax on the rock I had been sitting on, and then, when the air had blown out my dress to most corpulent proportions, I took the decisive stroke. I chopped through the air-pipe. I stuffed it as well as possible, and tied it in some sort of a knot—it was very stiff—in a great hurry, and then I kicked off the leaden shoes.

**Everything Upside Down.**

Never, never, never shall I forget the result of my forlorn dodge. I kicked off the shoe, as I have said, and, in an instant, the whole universe of waters turned upside down and swirled away beyond my head. In sober fact I had turned upside down—as I might have known I should.

Of course, the moment my leaden shoes went, down came my copper head-pot, being my heaviest part, and up went my feet. I had a pretty quick rise, certainly, but I prefer not to recall my feelings during the rush. I can quite understand now why a rise in the world makes some people giddy. All that I had before felt of amazement and horror I now felt multiplied by fifty and squeezed into about two seconds, so that they felt like ten hours. Up through that awful water and those moving shadows I went, feeling that I was in reality held still like a man in a nightmare.

When at last I stopped, I felt that it was but a matter of moments, and the air would leak away through that cut tube, and I should go down again, still head under, for the last time, to die in that grisly combination of mack-

intosh and copper kettle; also I felt choking, stifling, when—something had me roughly by the ankle, and I was dragged, a wretched rag of misplaced ambition, into a boat. The appearance of my legs sticking out above water caused intense amusement among the boat's crew—a circumstance which probably ought to have gratified me, although it didn't.

**Got Enough of Diving.**

I have little more to add, except that I shudder to this day whenever I see an acrobat standing on his head, because it is so ridiculous. But, if any body is thinking of going in for diving, by way of placid enjoyment, I shall be delighted to treat with him for the sale and purchase of a most desirable diving dress in unsoiled condition, cut in the most fashionable style, with a fascinating copper helmet and commodious collar, and a neat label for the chest. The shoes will not be included in the bargain, having been inadvertently left in a damp place.

**HOW PAPER WAS INVENTED.**

Just think if some one had not invented paper! There could be no such thing as Polly Evans' Story Page for Boys and Girls!

Hundreds of years ago there was no paper! We couldn't get on without it in these days, could we? We are always wanting it—to write upon, to wrap things up in; and last, but not least, to print our books and newspapers on.

It was a clever little Japanese gentleman who first invented it. This little man was a merchant, and as he had ever so many parcels to send out from his shop every week, he found the silk in which he always wrapped them a rather expensive item.

He was always thinking and puzzling his brains to try and invent something that would be cheaper.

One day while he was walking in his garden he came across a wasp's nest, and he noticed how wonderfully it was made—how the clever wasp had used some kind of wood, softened it into a thin paste with their jaws, and, after carefully shaping it, had left it to dry.

"If wasps can do a thing like that," thought the little gentleman to himself, "why can't I? If I could get some kind of wood, form it into a pulp by means of river water, wouldn't the result be something like the fabric of the wasps' nest. I'll try, anyway, and see what I can do. It would save myself and other people quite a lot of money if my experiment succeeded."

The little Japanese gentleman tried—and succeeded, too, in putting into practice the lesson that the wasps had taught him.

So that's the way paper was invented—years and years ago out in far Japan.

**Hospital Talk.**

A sick little girl who had spent many weeks in a hospital and unconsciously picked up many phrases commonly used by the nurses and doctors was telling her doctor about the death of her little brother, which had occurred just before her own illness befell her.

"It was all along of eatin' to much ice cream and ginger nuts," she narrated, with unctuous to the doctor. Then she smiled beautifully. "It was a beautiful death, doctor," she wound up piously.

**His Praying Was Nothing!**

A little boy was on his knees recently at night, and, as he prayed, he was present.

"It is a pleasure," she said to him afterward, "to hear you pray earnestly and seriously, and mean what you say, and care about it."

"Ah," he answered, "ah! but, auntie, you should hear me garble!"

## A Daring Feat.

You have heard of intrepid steeple-climbers, of course. Never a year passes that the newspapers do not publish a tale about some steeple-climber or other having made a particularly dangerous ascent in safety.

But have you ever heard of any one attempting the daring feat pictured here—standing on one's head on top of a steeple?

This was done by an Englishman whose business is laying down slate roofs. He has become so accustomed to dizzy heights that he thinks nothing of such performances as this.



AN OWL STOLE A PUPPY.

A Connecticut paper, mentioning the purchase of a fine Gordon puppy by a gentleman named J. was, added: "On Thursday he went away to work, leaving the puppy shut up in the barn. He did not get back till 8 o'clock in the evening, and while he was putting out his horse the puppy ran out in the barnyard. In a few minutes I have heard it yelping piteously. Thinking that one of the cattle had either hooked it or stepped on it, he ran out just in time to see a huge horned owl flying off with the puppy in his claws. He ran after him, hallooing, but the owl swooped off through an orchard, and this was the last he saw of his Gordon puppy."

**Pinless Chinese.**

A member of the Chinese Legation, clad in splendid pale hued silks, stood before the Casino at Newport.

"Pins," he said, "cause untidy habits. We have no pins in China. The right way to fasten things is with buttons and buttonholes or with loops and frogs. To fasten things with pins is to make use of an untidy makeshift. To employ pins is to become lazy and slovenly."

"We have no pins in China. Certain foreign manufacturers shipped millions of them to us in the past, but we used them back. We had no use for them. We were too neat."

**Henrico Is no longer afraid to ride the bucking broncho his brother brought him from Texas.**



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each trip the red and yellow flames grew smaller and the charred spot on the bridge grew larger.

At last the fire disappeared and the smoke drifted away. With his empty pail Hugh trudged back to his father at the switch.

"Well done, Hugh," said his father; "you have saved the bridge from burning. I am proud of you. Go home, now, and rest."

Hugh went home, proud and happy. He forgot his aching head and the gravel in his shoes.

Now when he walks the ties over the river he feels as if it was his bridge he is on, because he saved it from burning.—The Little Chronicle.

**Smart.**

From the Louisville Courier-Journal.

"Young man, there are two questions in life: 'Will it pay?' and 'Is it right?' Which shall you choose?"

"Both." "I'll use the first up to fifty, and then I can probably afford to adopt the second."

## AMUSEMENT.



"I'd Ravver Be Slapped 'n Not Notie!"

**TRUE STORY ABOUT HUGH.**

Hugh's father was a switchman. He went to work early in the morning and stayed all day at the railway tracks.

Hugh took his lunch at noon. There was a long bridge over the river which ran near the place where Hugh's father worked. At first Hugh, who is only ten years old, was afraid to walk across the ties, and see the river running beneath, but after a while he thought it fun to see how quickly he could cross the bridge.

One day he had taken his father's lunch, and, after his father had eaten, Hugh started back home, swinging the big tin dinner pail.

What was that smoke that Hugh saw a little way ahead? It seemed to come from the railway bridge.

"Fire, father," cried Hugh, "the bridge is on fire."

"Run, Hugh," answered his father. "Get some water from the river! I cannot leave the switch to help you. Be as quick as you can."

Hugh slid down the railway embankment to the river. In a moment the cover was off and Hugh had a brimful of water.

He climbed up the bank, holding the pail as carefully as he could. But his shoes sank into the gravel, and the water slopped over the top of the pail.

But Hugh reached the top of the bank, stepped quickly upon the bridge and

pouring the water upon the blaze. Then he slid down to the river to refill his pail.

He could hear the flames snap and crackle above him and he wondered how many times he must go back and forth before he could put them out. The pail had sometimes seemed large to Hugh when he brought his father's dinner, but now as he looked at the leaping flames it seemed very small. Again he clambered up the bank, poured as much water as he could carry on the flames and went back for more.

The sweat stood out on his forehead, his back ached and his shoes were filled with gravel, but he did not stop. He could see his father standing near the switch, watching him.

"Take another pailful, Hugh," he heard him call from far down the track. "You will have the fire put out soon."

Hugh could not count the times that he dipped his pail in the running water and climbed the steep bank. But with